



## Ambassador Wilkins message on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 U.S. Embassy, Ottawa, 11 September 06

The horrors of September 11 are unforgettable -- etched permanently into our memories. Here in Halifax today, we recall the thousands of victims of that terrorist attack, victims from over 90 countries. Innocent lives which were cut short leaving hearts broken all over the world.

But as we honor the memory of those who perished that day, other more positive images are also stirred. We remember the courage of rescue workers, the loving care of family and friends, and the solidarity and steadfastness of our many allies. Canada is paramount among those who came forward with support and assistance. More than 220 planes landed in Canada that day as we rushed to secure our skies.

Today, September 11, 2006, I am here in Halifax to express the deep gratitude of my country to all the people of Canada for the courage and support with which you reached out to us and for the warmth and hospitality which you extended to the thousands of people stranded in your country. The United States will never forget the valued friendship of our close ally and neighbor.

I am aware that the people in the Far North of Canada also reached out to help -- Yellowknife and Whitehorse were called on to support flights unexpectedly landing in Canadian territory. And so, while I can't be with you today in person, I can direct a special message of gratitude to you through this Virtual Presence Post.

The story of one air traffic controller in Whitehorse -- Dave White -- shows what surely happened throughout the day and the week, all across the region. Dave described his feeling of remoteness from the events in New York and Washington when he first witnessed the attacks on television. That disconnected feeling soon dissipated as Dave was called on to guide diverted flights into Whitehorse and became directly involved in responding to world events.

September 11 showed us that the world is shrinking and that all of our communities are inextricably linked. Like Dave White, we are all sensing that the remoteness we once experienced is quickly fading and that we are all connected in very real and immediate ways.

Thank you Dave, thank you North of 60, thank you Canada.